

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 3-26 and 29-68 are pending. The Applicant gratefully appreciates the Examiner's detailed summary and explanation of the rejections. Claims 3-9, 12-15, 18, 23 and 29-36 have been amended, claims 1-2 and 27-28 have been cancelled, and claims 37-68 have been newly added. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

1. Microfiche Appendix

The computer program listing filed on 10/19/00 as a microfiche appendix was objected as unacceptable, because 37 CFR 1.96(c) requires that such an appendix be submitted on compact discs.

The Applicant respectfully traverses this objection. MPEP 608.05(a) states (under the heading TEMPORARY CONTINUATION OF MICROFICHE PRACTICE THROUGH FEBRUARY 2201) that the Office will provide for the continuation of prior microfiche appendix practice for computer listings until February 28, 2001. Since the Applicant's microfiche appendix was submitted on October 19, 2000 (before February 28, 2001), it is submitted that the microfiche appendix of the present application is compliant with USPTO regulations.

2. Rejection of Claims 1, 3, 16-20, 27, 29 and 35-36 Under § 102(b)

Claims 1, 3, 16-20, 27, 29 and 35-36 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by USP 5,621,662 (Humphries).

Claims 1 and 27 have been cancelled. Regarding the remaining rejected claims, they all now depend upon amended claim 4 or amended claim 30, which are considered allowable for the reasons set forth below in Part 3. Thus, rejected claims 3, 16-20, 29 and 35-36 are considered allowable because, inter alia, they depend from an allowable independent claim, and for the sake of brevity no further argument is presented at this time.

It is therefore requested that this rejection be withdrawn.

3. Rejection of Claims 2, 4-8, 12, 28 and 30-34 Under § 103(a)

Claims 2, 4-8, 12, 28 and 30-34 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Humphries in view of JP 06230144 (Shimizu).

Claims 2 and 28 have been cancelled.

Regarding claim 4, this claim (as amended) recites a home automation system for a home having a plurality of rooms separated by doorways, wherein each of the rooms has at least one of the doorways associated therewith. The system comprises a plurality of controlled objects each disposed in one of the plurality of rooms, a plurality of entry/exit sensors each disposed at one of the doorways to detect movement of a person therethrough, a plurality of room motion sensors each disposed in one of the plurality of rooms to detect occupancy by a person therein, and a controller for controlling the controlled objects in response to detected movement by the plurality of entry/exit sensors and detected occupancy by the plurality of room motion sensors. For at least one of the rooms, the controller “assigns the one room to a **first room state** in response to no detected movement by any of the entry/exit sensors at the doorway associated with the one room and to no detected occupancy by any of the room motion sensors disposed in the one room, to a **second room state** in response to detected movement by any of the entry/exit sensors at the doorway associated with the one room, and to a **third room state** in response to detected occupancy by any of the room motion sensors disposed in the one room”, where “the control of any of the controlled objects in the one room by the controller varies depending upon which of the **first, the second and the third room states** the one room is assigned to. Claim 30 (as amended) essentially recites a method corresponding to claim 4.

It is respectfully submitted that neither Humphries or Shimizu teach or suggest assigning rooms to one of the three claimed room states, and controlling any of the controlled objects in the rooms in the claimed manner depending upon which of the three room states is assigned to the rooms. At best, Humphries and Shimizu appear to only contemplate controlling objects based upon whether or not the rooms are occupied (two possible states). Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claims 4 and 30 are not rendered obvious by Humphries and Shimizu.

Regarding claims 5-8, 12, 28 and 31-34, these claims depend from claim 4 or 30 (as amended), and are considered allowable because, inter alia, they depend from an allowable independent claim. Moreover, it is respectfully submitted that these references fail to teach or suggest all the elements recited in these claims. For example, claims 7 and 33 recite assigning at least one of the controlled objects to a controlled object state in response to the detected movement by one of the entry/exit sensors and/or the detected occupancy by one of the room motion sensors, and controlling the controlled object in response to the assigned controlled object state (which is in addition to the control thereof based upon the room states). The paragraphs of Shimizu relied upon by the Examiner simply appear to list the criteria for triggering the alarm, without teaching or suggesting the control thereof using the combination of the claimed room states and claimed controlled object state.

4. Rejection of Claims 9-11 Under § 103(a)

Claims 9-11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Humphries in view of USP 5,285,136 (Duhamel).

Claims 9-11 depend from claim 4 (as amended), and are considered allowable because, inter alia, they depend from an allowable independent claim. The addition of Duhamel does not appear to cure the deficiencies of Humphries and Shimizu. Moreover, it is respectfully submitted that these references fail to teach or suggest all the elements recited in these claims. For example, claim 11 recites that the sending unit of the light beam detector is disposed at a height from a bottom of the one doorway which is different from a height from the bottom of the one doorway at which the light beam receiving unit is disposed. The Examiner relies on Fig. 1 of Duhamel for teaching the relative component orientation recited in claim 11. However, Fig. 1 is merely a schematic diagram, and the Applicant respectfully submits that a schematic diagram alone does not teach or suggest the relative orientation of the sending and receiving units as recited in claim 11.

5. Rejection of Claims 13-14 Under § 103(a)

Claims 13-14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Humphries in view of USP 5,319,698 (Glidewell).

Claims 13-14 depend from claim 4 (as amended), and are considered allowable because, inter alia, they depend from an allowable independent claim. The addition of Glidewell does not appear to cure the deficiencies of Humphries and Shimizu.

6. Rejection of Claim 15 Under § 103(a)

Claim 15 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Humphries in view of Shimizu, Duhamel and Glidewell.

Claim 15 depends from claim 4 (as amended), and is considered allowable because, inter alia, it depends from an allowable independent claim. The addition of Duhamel and Glidewell does not appear to cure the deficiencies of Humphries and Shimizu.

7. Rejection of Claims 21-23 Under § 103(a)

Claims 21-23 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Humphries in view of Wang et al. ("Towards Dependable Home Networking: An experience Report").

Claims 21-23 depend from claim 4 (as amended), and are considered allowable because, inter alia, they depend from an allowable independent claim. The addition of Wang et al. does not appear to cure the deficiencies of Humphries and Shimizu. Moreover, it is respectfully submitted that these references fail to teach or suggest all the elements recited in these claims. For example, Wang et al. appear to fail to teach or suggest the power outlet having a multi-prong receptacle and a communications port as recited in claim 23.

8. Rejection of Claims 24-25 Under § 103(a)

Claims 24-25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Humphries in view of Wang et al. and USP 5,579,221 (Mun).

Claims 24-25 depend from claim 4 (as amended), and are considered allowable because, inter alia, they depend from an allowable independent claim. The addition of Wang et al. and Mun does not appear to cure the deficiencies of Humphries and Shimizu. Moreover, it is respectfully submitted that these references fail to teach or suggest all the elements recited in these claimse. For example, Wang et al. and Mun appear to fail to teach or suggest the IR transmitter jack and IR receiver jack as recited in claim 24.

9. Rejection of Claims 26 Under § 103(a)

Claim 26 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Humphries in view of Wang et al. and USP 5,572,438 (Ehlers).

Claim 26 depends from claim 4 (as amended), and is considered allowable because, inter alia, it depends from an allowable independent claim. The addition of Wang et al. and Ehlers does not appear to cure the deficiencies of Humphries and Shimizu.


10. New Claims

New claims 37-68 have been added. Applicant respectfully submits that the newly added claims are allowable over the references relied upon by the Examiner. Specifically, the Applicant believes the references relied upon by the Examiner fail to teach or suggest the termination of the room states as recited in claims 37-45 and 53-61, or the re-assignment of room states as recited in claims 46-49 and 62-65, or the assignment of a fourth room state in response to a button/switch device as recited in claims 50-52 and 66-68.

For the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the claims are in an allowable form, and action to that end is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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